



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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COMMISSIONER

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October 10, 2008

RE: Immunization Requirements: Provisional Enrollment Extension for Students Displaced by Hurricane Ike

Dear School Administrator:

On September 26, 2008, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) sent school districts in Texas a letter regarding the provisional enrollment provision in Texas law for students transferring from one Texas school to another due to displacement from Hurricane Ike. The current immunization requirements give transferring students a 30-day provisional enrollment period before immunization records must be provided to the new school (See the Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Part I, Chapter 97, Subchapter B, Section 97.69). In that letter, DSHS stated that it would re-evaluate the situation regarding that deadline if the agency found that the 30-day deadline appeared likely to cause substantial hardship for students displaced by Hurricane Ike.

Under the authority of the Governor's disaster declaration regarding Hurricane Ike, the DSHS has elected to suspend the 30-day requirement in the rule referenced above for students displaced by the hurricane, who are transferring from one Texas school to another, and have just not been able to obtain their immunization records. This suspension will expire on November 6, 2008, which is the date that the Governor's extension of the disaster declaration expires. On November 7, the 30-day requirement will be back in full legal effect.

Schools should continue to register for access to ImmTrac, the statewide immunization registry. Statewide connectivity to the registry will ensure that Texas is better prepared for emergency events in the future. The instructions and form for registration can be found at: www.immtrac.com.

The Houston Department of Health and Human Services (HDHHS) Registry Help Desk continues to assist with obtaining immunization records in both ImmTrac and the Houston Harris County Immunization Registry. The number to call is 713-791-6912.

Please contact the DSHS Immunization Branch at (800) 252-9152 if you have any questions about immunization requirements. Information is also available at: www.immunizetexas.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack C. Sims".

Jack C. Sims, Manager
Immunization Branch